

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated June 21, 2005. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

As outlined above, Claims 1 through 6, 8 through 14 and 16 through 19 are currently pending in this application. Claims 7, 15 and 20 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, the subject matter of Claims 7, 15 and 20 being substantially incorporated respectively into Claims 1, 8 and 16 from which Claims 7, 15 and 20 respectively depend. Also, Claims 1 through 6, 8 through 14 and 16 through 19 have been amended to correct formal errors, place the claims in better form and to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject invention. Entry of the amendments to the Claims 1 through 6, 8 through 14 and 16 through 19 is respectfully requested.

Additional Amendments:

The Specification and the Abstract of the Disclosure have been amended to correct formal errors and to better disclose and describe the features of the present invention. Entry of the amendments to the Specification and to the Abstract of the Disclosure is respectfully requested.

Prior Art Rejection

Claims 1 through 6, 8 through 14 and 16 through 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,480,415 to Makuta et al.

The Office Action states that Claims 7, 15 and 20 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the recitations of the base claim and any intervening claims (Office Action, page 5).

In response, as stated previously, Claims 7, 15 and 20 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, the subject matter of Claims 7, 15 and 20 being substantially incorporated respectively into Claims 1, 8 and 16 from which Claims 7, 15 and 20

respectively depend. Therefore, it is respectfully believed that Claims 1, 8 and 16, as well as Claims 2 through 6, 9 through 14 and 17 through 19 are in condition for allowance. Also, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 2 through 6, 9 through 14, and 17 through 19 are at least allowable for the same reasons that Claims 1, 8 and 16, from which they respectively ultimately depend, are allowable.

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1 through 6, 8 through 14 and 16 through 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102 (e) is respectfully requested.

Reconsideration and allowance of Claims 1 through 6, 8 through 14 and 16 through 19 are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of all the above, Applicants respectfully submit that certain clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art reference upon which the rejection in the Office Action relies. These differences are more than sufficient that the present invention as now claimed would not have been anticipated nor rendered obvious given the prior art. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the address and telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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